

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 049259

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. SAHARA: INTEGRATION OR LIBERATION?

ONE DAY AFTER THE SAHARAN TERRITORIAL ASSEMBLY (JEMAA) HAD VOTED TO INTEGRATE THE FORMER COLONY INTO MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA, THE ALGERIAN-BACKED POLISARIO FRONT RAN UP THE FLAG OF THE "DEMOCRATIC SAHARAN ARAB REPUBLIC." THE POLISARIO DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 27 IN AN ALGIERS RADIO BROADCAST. COMMENTING ON THE EARLIER JEMAA ACTION, EMBASSY RABAT SAYS:

--A SPANISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL EXPECTS MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA TO UNDERSTAND HIS GOVERNMENT'S RELUCTANCE TO ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH THE TRANSFER AND SAYS SPAIN IS, IN EFFECT, "ABANDONING" THE TERRITORY.

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--THE MOROCCANS EXPECT UNSYG WALDHEIM TO INSIST THAT THE JEMAA SESSION DID NOT SATISFY THE UN'S "CONSULTATION" REQUIREMENT, BUT THE GOM HAS SCANT RESPECT FOR THE UN'S ROLE IN THE DISPUTE. (CONFIDENTIAL) RABAT 1139, 2/27.)

2. THE PALESTINIANS

A. PLO WANTS SC DEBATE ON MOSQUES

USUN HAS LEARNED OF A PLO DESIRE TO BRING ALLEGED ISRAELI DESECRATION OF JERUSALEM MOSQUES BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

--THE PLO OBSERVER TOLD THE ARAB LEAGUE THAT HE HAD SENT THE UNSC PRESIDENT (AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN) A LETTER REQUESTING DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT, ALTHOUGH THE MISSION HAS RECEIVED NO SUCH COMMUNICATION.

--APPARENTLY THE ARAB GROUP WANTS TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT, BUT NOT DURING THE US PRESIDENCY.

MISSION COMMENT: WE HAVE TOLD THE EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN DELEGATIONS WE HOPED SERIOUS THOUGHT WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE OF WHETHER THE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS CONSTITUTED A THREAT TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY. THE BRITISH AND FRENCH DELEGATES ARE MAKING THE SAME POINT.

B. ARAFAT STILL TOP DOG

COMMENTING ON DISSENSION IN ARAB GUERRILLA RANKS, EMBASSY BEIRUT SAYS TALK OF A "CRISIS" IN RELATIONS BETWEEN FATAH AND SA'IQA IS PREMATURE. WHILE CONCEDED THAT ARAFAT MAY BE TRYING TO STAKE OUT POSITIONS INDEPENDENT OF SYRIA ON NONINFLAMMATORY ISSUES, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES:

--SA'IQA DOES NOT HAVE THE MILITARY MUSCLE OR RANK-AND-FILE SUPPORT AMONG PALESTINIANS TO SERIOUSLY CHALLENGE ARAFAT.

--SA'IQA AND ITS ROLE IN LEBANON IS LESS A CHALLENGE
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TO FATAH THAN A REMINDER OF SYRIAN PRESENCE.

--THE FLAP OVER RECONVENING THE JORDANIAN PARLIAMENT IS PROBABLY DUE, IN LARGE PART, TO ARAFAT'S DESIRE NOT TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY SYRIA. (CONFIDENTIAL) USUN 756, 2/27 AND BEIRUT 1785 2/26.) INGERSOLL

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